

MEXICAN INDEMNITY.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY,

TRANSMITTING

A report showing the amount of money received from the Mexican Government under the treaty of indemnity; the amount of cost of transportation of the same to the United States, &c., &c.

JANUARY 24, 1844.

Read, and referred to the Committee on Naval Affairs.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, *January 22, 1844.*

SIR: In answer to a resolution of the House of Representatives of the 13th inst., I have the honor to transmit herewith a statement of the amount of moneys received from the Government of Mexico, under the treaty of indemnity; the amount paid for transporting said moneys to the United States; the number of persons to whom compensation has been paid; and the amount of moneys transported in the vessels of the United States navy.

In reference to that part of the resolution which directs me to inform the House why compensation has been refused to Commander I. D. Knight, for bringing in one of the instalments of this Mexican indemnity, I have the honor to state that arrangements were made with a special agent (Mr. Southall) to proceed to Mexico, and obtain the payment of the arrears of interest which became due on the 30th April, 1843. An insurance on the amount was effected in this country. Commander Knight was despatched to Vera Cruz, by the naval officer commanding the squadron in the Gulf, to bring the money to the United States; and he conveyed the agent, and the money in his charge, to this country. Commander Knight, in his letter to the Navy Department reporting his arrival at New Orleans, says: "If this money had been shipped by merchants on their own account, I should have received one per cent. for freight; and, as it was a claim recovered of Mexico for American merchants, I suppose I am entitled to the freight. Will you be pleased to instruct me if I am correct in this opinion, and of whom I am to get it?"

This letter of Commander Knight was sent to this department, with an intimation that an answer might be transmitted to him at Norfolk.

As the Government had undertaken to receive and transport to this
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country the indemnity that might be paid by Mexico, it was conceived that the service was a public one, rendered by a vessel of the United States, and by officers and a crew in its employ; and it was not perceived why those officers, or any of them, should receive an extra compensation for the performance of a public duty. Nor did the department feel itself justified, under the circumstances, in adding to the expenses which had already been charged upon the fund.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. C. SPENCER,

Secretary of the Treasury.

HON. JOHN W. JONES,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Statement of the amounts received from the Government of Mexico, on account of the indemnity payable by that republic.

Amount of interest due 30th April, 1843	-	-	-	\$262,934 79
Out of this amount there was paid to Peyton A. Southall, for his commission for receiving and bringing to the United States the said sum, and for insurance effected by him	-	-	-	3,286 68
Net proceeds	-	-	-	<u>\$259,648 11</u>
Amount of first instalment, paid on the 29th July, 1843	-	-	-	<u>\$141,020 00</u>

The annexed statement, furnished by the Bank of America, shows the amount retained by the bank to pay freight and insurance.

The amount so retained, and that paid to Peyton A. Southall, are all the payments authorized by the department, in relation to the expenses of the remittance of the indemnity which has, as yet, been received from Mexico. The amount transported in vessels of the United States was that paid on the 30th April, 1843, viz: \$262,934 79; it was brought from Vera Cruz to New Orleans in the United States brig Dolphin, Commander I. D. Knight.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, *January 20, 1844.*

Specie, per brig Petersburgh, received from Messrs. Hargous & Brothers, on account of the Mexican indemnity.

71 bags of silver dollars, said to contain	-	-	-	\$141,020 00
Short	-	-	-	\$15 00
Counterfeit	-	-	-	23 00
				<u>38 00</u>
Carried forward	-	-	-	<u>\$140,982 00</u>

Brought forward	-	-	\$140,982 00
Received for premium of $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. on 140,000			
Mexican dollars	-	-	\$350 00
And 7 per cent. on 904 Spanish dollars	-	-	63 28
			<hr/> 413 28
			<hr/> \$141,395 28
Charges—			
Paid for insurance	-	-	\$2,111 17
Freight -	-	-	\$744 10
Less \$15 short -	-	-	15 00
			<hr/> 729 10
			<hr/> 2,840 27
Net	-	-	<hr/> <hr/> \$138,555 01

BANK OF AMERICA, October 21, 1843.

